

Informal Departmental Obituary

Hubert Rudolf Georg Schwyzer, Professor Emeritus in this Department, died of stomach cancer on June 22, 2006.

Hubert was born in Vienna, Austria on March 16, 1935 to Dr. Georg Clemens Schwyzer, a physician, and Elisabeth Schuh Schwyzer. The family was forced to flee Austria in 1938, nine months after the Anschluss. Hubert grew up in England and attended a Jesuit boarding school before joining the Royal Air Force, where he served from 1953 to 1955. He went on to study at Reading University, where he graduated with a degree in philosophy in 1958. In 1959 he came to the United States for graduate study at the University of California at Berkeley, earning his doctorate in 1968. He taught philosophy at the University of Alberta, Canada for two years from 1963 to 1965, and then at UC Santa Barbara for 37 years from 1965 until his retirement in 2002. At UCSB he served three separate terms as Department Chair and was active for many years in the University's Education Abroad Program.

Hubert's work centered on Kant and Wittgenstein and sought to examine and make accessible their insights into the nature of the relationship between thought and reality. He published many articles in the leading journals of our profession. His principle work, *The Unity of Understanding: A Study in Kantian Problems*, was published in 1990 by Clarendon Press-Oxford. In this book, Hubert attempts to isolate a central problem in Kant's theory of understanding as it is developed in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and to suggest ways of resolving it which are consistent with Kant's overall aims. The solution is inspired by the Wittgensteinian tradition in which Hubert worked during much of his career.

Newton Garver (*This Complicated Form of Life*, pp. 57-58) writes of Hubert's book as follows:

one of the most interesting contributions to the issues considered here has been that of Hubert Schwyzer in his brilliant essay, The Unity of Understanding. A Study of Kantian Problems. ... the scholarly quality of the essay is impressive.... With Bennett and Guyer he engages in extensive discourse, quoting them generously and confronting their readings of Kant at length. He is so forthright, so respectful, and so focused on the central theme in these confrontations that I would expect Bennett and Guyer to feel more honored than abused by his treatment of them. Schwyzer's style is elegant throughout....

After his retirement, Hubert had more time to pursue his passion of playing his cello in chamber music ensembles, including the Bow's Art Trio, a group he helped found. Music and his friendships with his fellow musicians were great joys to him.

Hubert Schwyzer was a kind and gentle human being, loved by all who knew him. He was popular teacher and an admired and respected colleague, whose wise and humane counsel made him highly influential in departmental deliberations. A remarkably selfless

philosopher, his work was motivated not by thoughts of professional advancement, but solely by the desire to win his way to philosophical insight and understanding.